THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION

MAGAZINE.

Sow with a generous hand;
  Pause not for toil or pain;
Weary not through the heat of summer,
  Weary not through the cold spring rain;
But wait till the autumn comes
  For the sheaves of golden grain.

Sow, while the seeds are lying
  In the warm earth's bosom deep:
If your warm tears fall upon it;
  They will stir in their quiet sleep,
And the green blades rise the quicker,
  Perchance, for the tears you weep.

Then sow; for the hours are fleeting,
  And the seed must fall to-day;
And care not what hands shall reap it,
  Or if you have passed away
Before the waving corn-fields
  Shall gladden the sunny day.

Sow: and look onward and upward,
  Where the starry light appears—
Where, in spite of the coward's doubting
  Or your own heart's trembling fears,
You shall reap in joy the harvest
  You have sown to-day in tears.

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PREFACE.

ANOTHER year has passed away with its sunshine and its shadows, but by the good hand of our God, Ragged Schools still pursue their career of mercy.

Chief among the shadows of 1875 is the inroad made by death on our ranks; for no less than sixteen conspicuous supporters of our movement have been called from service to reward. Bequeathing as they did the legacy of a good example, we trust that our Elijahs will speedily be replaced by many an Elisha of kindred spirit, and even, if possible, with still greater power of labour.

Notwithstanding the social results some sanguine persons anticipate from the action of School Boards, facts with which the newspapers teem indicate that long years must elapse before Ragged Schools can be superseded. Like city missionaries and open-air preachers, who may be regarded as so many pioneers to the regular ministry—so Ragged Schools have a socio-religious work to perform which no other agency can so well accomplish.

Hence we are glad to record that the zeal of Ragged School teachers has not abated. For the fact, which speaks louder than words, that eighty-three operations were instituted last year shows that our fellow-labourers do not intend to haul down the Ragged School flag.

Through the action of the London School Board our day scholars have already decreased above two-thirds, and, judging from the past, a still further diminution may be expected. But as there is as great a need for Week Night Schools as ever, the Committee of the Ragged School Union are making strenuous efforts so to extend them as to attract larger numbers of juvenile roughs of both sexes above the School Board age of thirteen. With this view many conferences were held with local officials last autumn with every sign of success. As one stimulus to greater efforts in this direction, the Central Society has agreed to increase their grants towards the salaries of Night School teachers from a moiety to two-thirds.

In issuing this Magazine, the primary aim for the past twenty-seven years has been to keep its readers abreast with every scheme calculated to reclaim our social waifs. By this means the interest in this, the most remarkable of modern home missions, has been sustained, and fresh helpers have been won to the movement. In future, however, it will be issued Quarterly instead of monthly, as it is considered that the value of Ragged Schools is so universally admitted, that a quarterly issue will suffice to maintain the public interest and to record the progress of the work.

It would require the prescience of a prophet to indicate the future history of Ragged Schools. But should they be as successful in the future as they have been in the past, we can wish for them no nobler history when their obituary comes to be written. In the meantime, let us so strive to win our social waifs for Christ, that they may become "our crown of joy and rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus at his coming!"

1, EXETER HALL, W.C., THE EDITOR.
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